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# AMATEUR HOUSE DECORATION

## FANCY FURNISHINGS

### WALL BRACKETS.

IN the decorative treatment of wall surfaces, a very important part is played by the forms and colors of the wall brackets which are destined to be placed upon the walls of an apartment. The mural decorations of our rooms are no longer confined to fresco painting, oak panelling, or arras, as in days gone by; a vast range of varied ornamentation is now within easy reach of the multitude. This being so, it is but natural that the most effective and economic means of treating our wall surfaces should be adopted by most people who presume to possess even a modicum of good taste. Dainty wall papers, pictures, plaques and brackets are now the approved items of mural display. Wall brackets of every conceivable shape and color

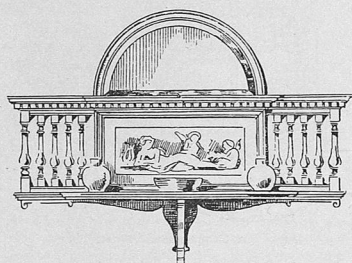


Fig. 1. Simple Wall Bracket.

are now in vogue, for enamelling is, as we all know, woefully prevalent in this department of home art.

As a rule, the generality of wall-brackets suffer from two common errors—they are frequently made too large, and consequently look heavy and inadequately supported, and they are also often made in a too split-up manner. This latter quality, *i. e.*, having too many little shelves, mirrors, spindles and pediments, is often an indication of inferiority. The majority of high-class wall brackets that are now being made are beginning to assume a more modest and dignified appearance.

Such a character certainly attaches to the dainty little china shelf that is shown in Fig. 1. It is extremely simple, and quite unlike the brackets that were, until recently, in vogue. The centre compartment is intended to frame an autotype or a small water-color drawing, and in the semi-circular panel above it is proposed to insert a bevelled mirror.

Corner brackets are often the only things wherewith to furnish an empty corner of a room. These articles are capable of a considerable variety of treatment, and, as a rule, lend themselves very readily to the passing changes of fashion. The design which is illustrated in

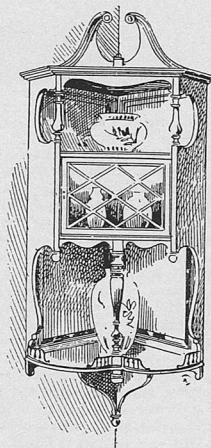


Fig. 2. Corner Bracket.

our fourth sketch shows an effective little angle cupboard in the Queen Anne style. The abundant shaping of the shelves and sides, as well as the "swan-neck" pediment, are features which are, perhaps, more allowable in a corner bracket than they would be in a furniture of greater size and importance.

A dainty little china cupboard is shown in our second illustration. Here, again, an attempt has been made to depart from the usual ungainly height of the orthodox wall bracket. In this example the disposition of the cupboard and open spaces is judiciously arranged, so that the article altogether looks as though it were intended to be hung upon a wall. This, and also the companion design, could, with very

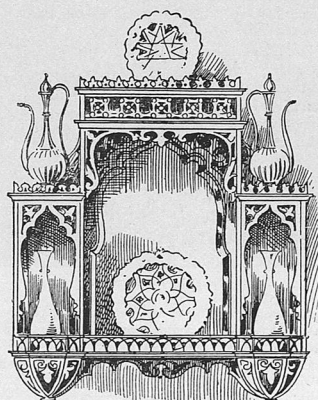


Fig. 3. Bracket in the Moorish Style.

slight modifications, be transformed into convenient and inexpensive over-doors.

In the matter of brackets though, as in items of greater importance, due attention must at all times be given to the variances of fashionable taste. The French style, for instance, is just as applicable to these articles as it is to cabinets and sofas, and Moorish art, too, has not altogether been discarded by the public. The effectiveness of Cairene frets, and the stained green hues which modern Anglo-Moresque cabinet work is made to assume, has insured the favor of many lovers of Oriental art. Such a shapely *étagère* as that shown in our third sketch would make a most interesting feature on a drawing-room wall, and, when provided with its quantum of nick-nacks, it would assume considerable importance as a piece of color in the apartment.

A colonial bracket is shown in Fig. 4, which would be an appropriate wall decoration for a colonial parlor or sitting-room.

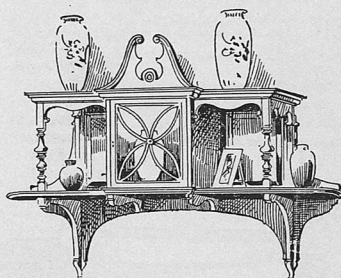


Fig. 4. Colonial Bracket.]

## LEATHER WORK

LEATHER embossing may be said to have been until quite recently one of the lost arts, and we are only now awakening to the peculiar adaptability of its medium for many articles of ornament; for the great and splendid technique of the past, the various ways in which leather was fashioned and the many artistic uses to which embossed leather could be put were quite forgotten. Where used for a commonplace article, such as a pocket book, a portmanteau, or a purse, we have been accustomed to see it employed as a smooth, undecorated covering without any artistic treatment of the material itself.

The craft of decorating leather has in all probability existed since the time leather has been used at all. The earliest examples extant are, perhaps, the sword-belts of the Romans, which were cut and notched in primitive designs. It grew to be a flourishing craft in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, where we find it employed on a multitude of articles, but, of course, mostly on book covers; it reached its zenith dur-